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Wandering Wheels Newsletter

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### Wandering Wheels Newsletter, June 1989

Wandering Wheels

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**EXPRESS MAIL**  
**NEXT DAY SERVICE**



**FAX**

**FEDERAL  
EXPRESS**

*Hurrying a last minute thought to you...*  
*Bob*

Over the years I have had the privilege of sharing in retreats under the leadership of Chaplain Joe Miller. Joe has advanced in rank from Captain to Lieutenant Colonel! He has always had a good ear for people and especially kids. He plays a mean guitar and knows all the silly songs. So, when you mix a Lt. Colonel Chaplain with bikes and a Wheels' gang, you're bound to have a great weekend! We traveled in the "Camel" 600 miles to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, to meet 50 "military brats" (that's an affectionate term)! These kids are on the move throughout their growing-up years so special effort to show them a good time in the name of Jesus is important. The bike trip covered 100 miles over 2 days with one night in an old Methodist church and the next night camping out in a State Park. Late night ruckus, "smores", camp-fire, and "I'm too tired to ride!" all made for a delightful weekend.



An age that only a mother can love... or a Wheels' staff member!

This retreat was scheduled right on the heels of the Break-away Coast to Coast. Only 4 days separated the 2 trips. Was it worth the 1,200 miles round trip, loading and unloading bikes, cooking all their meals? YES! At first I questioned my sanity, but I knew the effort of driving all those miles was catalyst for a receptive spirit. The 100-mile bike ride says, "Tough guy or gal!" It gave the participants a story for Monday morning school chit-chat, the Post Chapel received good brag, but most of all, the teaching turf for talking Jesus was hard to beat. This kind of effort wouldn't make sense without the spiritual input.

Jim Jelsema and John Bonham joined me to beef up the staff. They are 2 old Wheels' salts...a real plus!

One of the base youth leaders, a Battalion Commander, is transferring to Virginia and wants to set up a 1-week bivouac with 100 of his troops using mountain bikes. Boy, would that be exciting! He wants Wheels to conduct the ride. Will keep you posted!

## KITCHEN KIDS



Picture speaks a 1,000 words... oh, the story behind each life!

The military run got us ready for a 40-hour, 1,100-mile marathon to Washington, D.C., and back. Twenty-six "screamers" who meet with us every Tuesday night in the Wheels' Kitchen were bused to the Capitol, put on Schwinn Yo Scooters and zoomed from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial to the Vietnam Monument. From there we scootered to Arlington Cemetery where they witnessed The Changing of the Guard. On the way to lunch the kids saw 10,000 motorcyclists parading in memory of the Vietnam War dead. These were black helmeted Harley-Davidson riders-- quite a sight! The afternoon was filled with jumping curbs, waiting at stoplights and catching up with one another. The White House, Capitol and Smithsonian were next. By late afternoon we were back at the bus loading up and anticipating a "Golden Arches" stop and a 600-mile all night bus ride home!

Wheels has been around these kids for years. This little retreat did things for us relationally that will work real magic in the years to come. They know we care, we love them, and the Jesus link is there! These kinds of efforts are only possible because of your help!

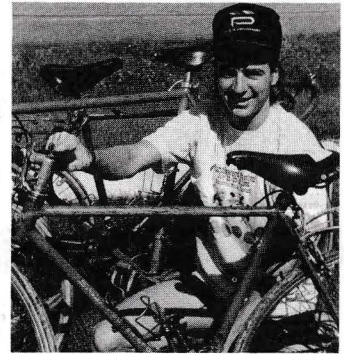


## Good Copy

I was listening to an Indianapolis station when an announcement came on inviting people to join the "Night Crawler" for a weekend outing. The "Night Crawler" is a program much like our Possum program. It's headquartered in southern Indiana. I felt a special rush knowing God had given Wheels the inspiration for the mobile retreat concept. Just that spot announcement helped so much!

## Old Bikes for New

We are selling all our old Super Sports! These bikes are 70,000 miles old! Some have been painted 3 times! What faithful pieces of equipment! Many of them have been used in Israel, England, and about every state in the USA. We're replacing them with mountain bikes. The old bikes are being passed along to Wheaton College's wilderness program where they will continue to serve kids.



Metal fatigued - stressed out - Super Sports with Russ Munn, new WW staffer.

## 1989 Spring Coast to Coast

There were 28 of us who made the trip from San Diego, California, to Jacksonville, Florida. This was Wheels' second try at working with the retirement age group. It wound up being one of the toughest (most difficult) to date! The riders seemed bent on just riding. "Stop and smell the daisies" was not on their agenda! They were standing in line a half hour early no matter the breakfast hour..."Don't slow us down!"

I advertised this trip without the traditional Wheels' spiritual objectives. The reason being that Wheels could take on a trip or two and simply serve the cycling community. This would be our "tent making" trip--create a little cash flow, you know.

I, personally, learned a lesson. I had never conducted a tour without offering devotions and prayer as a working part of the trip. The trip took on a real emptiness--just a ride. A day can be a 12-hour celebration of praise and thanks to our Maker. People, natural beauty, safe riding, all biological functions, recuperating bodies, sleep that mends, are all praiseworthy! Enjoying the handiwork of people who restore old homes or even whole towns is reason enough to respond to God's goodness. One of our men had the misfortune of having his wife pass away while he was on the ride. After putting his home in order he returned to finish the ride. This gave many of us pause to really consider God. With just a little twist of the dial we'll be back on course with next year's spring tour! No more apology for crediting God with the special joys of a Wheels' tour!



"1989 Breakaway" all poised and ready to leave California coast.

## CHINA

Three days into the spring coast to coast I flew to China. The Chinese team invited me to come to Guangzhou (Canton) and celebrate with them. The province officials were holding several banquets in honor of the Chinese riders. Dale Thomas, a Wheels' vet who helped staff the fall Chinese coast to coast, accompanied me. I've never felt such bonding as I did with the Chinese. Many gifts were shared. Several of the Chinese commented that they had given up smoking. Mr. Tong, the leading Communist official on the tour, gave up alcohol. They made a point to share their decisions.



I know these are not biggies, but God warmed my heart as they shared some of these stories with me. And now in light of the demonstrations, who knows what is going to happen? I am so pleased to pass along this information to you, as well.



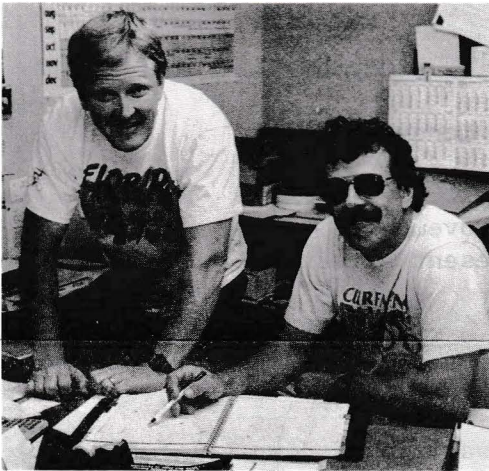
China Coast-to-Coast Team receiving applause from fellow countrymen.



Trophy in the form of a picture. It, too, speaks a 1,000 words!

## Summer 1989

This will be our 35th coast to coast! Jerry Vinyard of Wickenburg (Arizona) fame will be completing his 5th and receiving his silver medal! He is the first in his age category to do so. (I'll get my 25th! Can you believe it??) We leave Long Beach on the 10th of June and will arrive in Brunswick, Georgia, on the 15th of July. If you are close enough to the route, get your bike and join us! The second part of the summer we will ride the National Parks Tour starting in Prescott, Arizona, and going to Yellowstone.



Bob Lincoln (left) and Ted Bowers (right)

The buses will run all summer long. Ted Bowers and Bob Lincoln head up the summer bus touring schedule. In our turnaround at Wheels Ted and Bob have done a super job of keeping the day-to-day operation going. The nuts and bolts stuff falls in their court. Zane Huffman, Jeff Arnette and many volunteer staff will fill out the busing operation.

## Quotations

"The ego that sees a 'thou' is not the same ego that sees an 'it'." -- Joseph Campbell

"Mankind yearning for God and God yearning for mankind met in compassion at the cross." -- Joseph Campbell

"Jesus came down into this world to be crucified to awaken our hearts to compassion." -- Joseph Campbell

## The following is an excerpt from a letter in response to the new Wheels' book, Wandering Wheels Coast to Coast:

"Hi Coach -- Everybody else at my house is in bed but I just finished the CC book and wanted to write a quick note. What a good book! That's about as close as I can come to reliving a CC trip without riding another. Thanks. Thanks for the book



and thanks to you. My 16 mo. old son just woke up (Jason) and as I rocked him back to sleep I prayed that the Lord would bring people like you into his life as He has in mine. I finished the book with tears..."

-- Janell (Tharp) Hibbs  
'76 CC and '81 CC

## *Two Weddings*

Kent Merrick and Tonya Schroyer are newly married! They both served as staff on the China Coast to Coast. Kent had been our lead bike mechanic for sometime and now works in Wisconsin at the Schwinn Paramount factory--something he has always wanted to do!

Paul King, better known as "Snowball", will marry Jan Canze on July 8! They met on CIRCLE AMERICA I. Paul will follow his dream of employment in an art related field. Wheels' hasn't had a more faithful staff man. I'd hate to count the number of shirts he has silk screened with his own unique designs, not to mention his creative touches to our Wheels' newsletters. Other than myself, Paul has led more cycling groups abroad than any other staff member. Like a pillar, Paul will be missed!



Paul King, alias "Snowball" and Jan Canze (soon to be Jan King!)

## **Fall of '89**

1. One-week New England tour - September 22 - October 1
2. Twelve-day Arizona tour - Prescott to Monument Valley via Grand Canyon - October 5 - 17
3. China tour - Hong Kong to Shanghai - November 3 - December 7 (dates tentative due to present situation in China)

For more information on above fall tours, please contact Wandering Wheels, P. O. Box 207, Upland, Indiana, 46989 - telephone: 317-998-7490.

Wheels has a wonderfully full summer and has in no way slowed down. I failed to mention that we are also helping lead a team from Birmingham, Alabama, on a ride through Vermont. They need some leadership and Wheels is providing some staff and equipment.

**Pray with us! Our summers are rather like going to war!**

One last thought: "If everything is coming your way you're probably in the WRONG LANE."  
(Jacksonville Bicycle Program)

China Letter

I just received his letter  
from one of the Chinese court-  
to-  
court riders.  
helped bring them to America.  
I felt real impressed to share  
this story with you in light of  
all that is happening in China.  
Write and give me some feed-  
back ..... what should I do?  
Bob



Dear Coach:

I have no idea where you are reading my letter which I think will make you feel embarrassed.

For many years since I began to learn English, I yearned for the United States. Wandering Wheels offered me the opportunity to visit this land, a land of peace and tranquility. How I'd like to live in this country! But I came back after that trip. It's more important that I had been cherishing a dream that our country was getting better and better. But the fact has shattered my hopes absolutely! I think you, just like many Americans, have been paying close attention to what's going on in Beijing and all over China recently.

In the past one month, thousands of students demonstrated in Beijing for freedom, democracy, and human rights. More than 3,000 students took hunger strikes. They demanded the government to ~~ack~~ acknowledge the movement to be patriotic and democratic, and hold an immediate dialogue between the top Party and State leaders and their representatives. The event developed rapidly. Marches in

support of Beijing's hunger striking students have been held in more than 20 of China's provincial capitals. Millions of people from government departments, factories and ordinary citizens had joined the students to voice their support and sympathy, urging the leadership to ~~or~~ respond immediately to the student's demands. But the government refused. It called the movement 'disturbance' and mustered troops to suppress the 'disturbance'. ABSOLUTE power CORRUPTS ABSOLUTELY!

I'm sorry I can't tell you more in the letter. But I'd like to tell you what we, my wife and I, are thinking now. We see no hope. We see no sense in living on in this country. We are crying, crying in the wilderness!!

I'm begging your understanding. I'm begging your help!

After a long bitter time of heart searching I determine to write you. We are on fire constantly with an ambition, and that is to go to the United States. This thought is with us day and night.

I need a good 'samaritan'. Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons. I need a guarantee. I thought of you, Coach.



The only way we go to the United States is to apply for the admission to graduate studies in some university. I know what's awaiting us. I have met many Chinese students during that trip. They have to work while studying. It's hard. But they are free. Nothing is more important than freedom. If only we can earn by the sweat of our brows, no matter ~~over~~ what we get in life. We are almost thirty. We can afford no more delay. It's at the eleventh hour now.

According to the rules, the guarantee is willing and able to receive, maintain and support the persons guaranteed, ready and willing to deposit a bond, if necessary, to guarantee that such persons will not become a public charge during their stay in the United States.

We can study in Taylor University. Upland, if it is possible. It will be the most difficult to get the visa. The application may be disapproved by reason of 'immigrant tendency'. I'll show them the Wandering Wheels' certificate that I pedaled a bicycle coast to coast. I don't know if your contact with the consul in Kwangchow will do something about the case.

Am I presenting an excessive demand. Coach?

I respect you the most! We place all hopes on you!!  
Awaiting the favor of your prompt attention!

May God bless us. HALLELUJAH!

Yours sincerely  
Todd  
Jan 1. 1989